

## **AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS**

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

### **Listing of Claims:**

1. (Currently Amended) An automatic sampler comprising:  
a plurality of sample vessels; and  
a needle for collecting liquid samples sequentially from the sample vessels,  
said needle containing a non-noble base metal and having an outer surface coated  
with a first coating material that has a chemical activity lower than a chemical activity  
of the base metal of said needle, wherein said coating material includes a noble  
metal including platinum, a platinum group metal, or gold that is plated or deposited  
on said needle, and wherein a second coating material comprising a quartz thin film  
is formed on an inner surface of said needle by a chemical vapor deposition method.

Claim 2 (Cancelled)

3. (Currently Amended) An automatic sampler instrument comprising:  
an automatic sampler including:  
a plurality of sample vessels; and  
a needle for collecting liquid samples sequentially from the sample  
vessels, said needle containing a non-noble base metal and having an outer surface

coated with a coating material that has a chemical activity lower than a chemical activity of the base metal of said needle, wherein said coating material includes a synthetic resin coating including polyetheretherketone that is coated on said needle, wherein the instrument further comprises a liquid analysis apparatus for receiving the liquid samples collected by the needle.

Claim 4 (Cancelled)

5. (Currently Amended) An automatic sampler comprising:  
a plurality of sample vessels; and  
a needle for collecting liquid samples sequentially from the sample vessels, said needle containing a non-noble base metal and having an outer surface coated with a coating material that has a chemical activity lower than a chemical activity of the base metal of said needle, wherein said coating material includes a non-noble metal that has a chemical activity lower than a chemical activity of iron and is plated or deposited on said needle, said non-noble metal including nickel or chromium.

Claim 6 (Cancelled)

Claim 7 (Cancelled)

Claim 8 (Cancelled)

Claim 9 (Cancelled)

Claim 10 (Cancelled)

Claim 11 (Cancelled)

Claim 12 (Cancelled)

13. (Currently Amended) An automatic sampler instrument comprising:—  
an automatic sampler including:  
a plurality of sample vessels; and  
a needle for collecting liquid samples sequentially from the sample vessels, said needle containing a non-noble base metal and having an outer surface coated with a coating material that has a chemical activity lower than a chemical activity of the base metal of said needle, wherein said coating material is a noble metal including platinum, a platinum group metal, or gold,  
wherein the instrument further comprises a liquid analysis apparatus for receiving the liquid samples collected by the needle.

14. (Currently Amended) The automatic sampler instrument according to Claim 13, wherein said automatic sampler is included in an instrument further comprising:  
comprises  
~~— a liquid analysis apparatus for receiving the liquid samples collected by the needle; and~~  
~~— a rinsing means for rinsing the needle after collecting the liquid samples.~~

Claim 15 (Cancelled)

16. (Currently Amended) The ~~automatic sampler instrument~~ according to Claim 3, ~~wherein said automatic sampler is included in an instrument further comprising:~~  
~~— a liquid analysis apparatus for receiving the liquid samples collected by the needle; and~~  
~~— a rinsing means for rinsing the needle after collecting the liquid samples.~~

Claim 17 (Cancelled)